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ABSTRACT

This paper examines relevant issues of ethical value development in higher education in general and communication studies in particular. To accomplish this, the paper discusses: (1) the need for attention to ethics in the American culture; (2) selected issues relating to teaching ethical values in university courses; and (3) suggestions as to how to move from values-neutral education to proactive values-added education for communication classes and for other disciplines. Forty references and a working list of ethics centers are attached. (RS)

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Ethical Questions in an Unethical World

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Ethical Questions in an Unethical World

Abstract

The author examines issues that are relevant to ethical value development in higher education and communication studies. Specific attention is given to the study of ethics in our culture, selected issues relating to teaching ethical values in university courses; and, finally, suggestions are presented as to how to move from values-neutral education to proactive values-added education in communication courses.

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Ethical Questions in an Unethical World

> Every minute, 28 children under age five die throughout the world -- 27 of them are in developing countries. It has been estimated that at least half of these deaths could be averted, and as many disabilities prevented, by a handful of low-cost health actions. (Deets, 1992, p.3)

> It's very clear that one of the major reasons why the Japanese are ahead in civilian technology is that their engineers and scientists work on designing automobile doors, and ours work on missiles. (Drucker, 1989, p. 406)

> The disparities in living standards that separate them [the poor] from the rich verge on the grotesque. In 1989, the world had 157 billionaires, perhaps 2 million millionaires, and 100 million homeless. Americans spend $5 billion each year on special diets to lower their calorie consumption, while 400 million people around the world are so undernourished their bodies and minds are deteriorating. As water from a single spring in France is bottled and shipped to the prosperous around the globe, nearly 2 billion people drink and bathe in water contaminated with deadly parasites and pathogens. (Durning, 1990, p. 135)

> We have done far less than we could to save the Third World. If we took one tenth of what our military is wasting every year, we could take care of these poverty-stricken and desperate areas. (Commager, 1989, p. 223)

> We ought always to do good, not to the most virtuous but to the most needy; for they are the persons who will be most grateful, and when you make a feast, you should invite not your friend, but the beggar and the empty soul; for they will love you, and attend you and come about your doors, and will be the best pleased, and the most grateful, and will invoke many a blessing on your head. (Plato, p. 239)

Overview

Talking about ethics without consideration of justice is like talking about prayer without a belief in a deity. Unfortunately we find ourselves in a world and a primary culture that is fraught with inequity if not outright injustice. For

example, between 1981 and 1991, federal government spending on domestic food aid programs dropped. Hardest hit were the food stamp and child nutrition programs such as Women, Infants and Children (WIC) and Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC). During this time, the number of people in poverty rose from 29.3 million to 33.1 million, or 14 percent of the population while President Reagan claimed that hunger did not exist in the US and that those on welfare essentially were deadbeats. (Chapin, 1987, p. 15) Administration officials were able to reduce taxes at the upper income levels. Justice was scorned.

The study of ethics and justice takes faculty and students beyond the sole and limiting purview of self interest. These considerations force all of us to recognize that we live in a world of choices. From a systems-analysis approach, each choice we make causes reactions elsewhere in the system.

The simple exercise of asking each student and faculty member to project -- multiply by six billion (the population our planet approaches) -- our present consumption and waste patterns will tell us that there is no possibility that production could meet the demand. Even limiting the exercise to food calories consumed may lead us to conclude that there can be no system of ethical justice where some five percent of the population use as much of fifty percent of the energy and resources of the entire planet while over 100 million are homeless and millions more suffer from malnutrition.

Background

We learn of insider trading, savings and loan mismanagement, B-2 and other military cost overruns, allegations of congressional leaks of FBI reports, mega drug deals, expensive "golden parachutes" available for upper-level managers only, and we learn of members of congress running up huge bills at the capitol cafeteria and House checking accounts (rubbergate) without timely payment.

In light of broken confidence in public officials, it is no wonder that calls for universities to move from values-neutral education to values-added education are sounding as a society that joys in the fall of the "iron curtain" in Eastern Europe perceives that the core ingredients of its own culture (basic human decency and morality) well may be in decay. It appears obvious that ethics are not taught adequately at home or within our public school educational systems.

Kibler (1992) notes a decline in equating cheating as a moral issue. Says he,

> Now, much of the research being done on why students cheat has concluded that cheating is a problem of moral development -- that many students have poorly developed value systems, making it difficult for them to consider issues beyond their desire for a certain grade when deciding whether or not to cheat. (p. A23)

Kibler continued:

> Even though the mission statements of most institutions still include the development of students' ethical standards as an educational goal, many colleges and universities have taken a neutral position concerning traditional values in recent

> years, including taking a laissez-faire attitude toward students' moral development. At the same time, traditional agents of socialization in society, such as the family and the church, seem to have become increasingly ineffective in providing young people with moral direction. (p. A23)

Of course cheating at the university level is but one indication of the need for attention to ethics in higher education. Gardner (1993) notes that twice during a single month he had received verbal and written confirmation that expenses and a honorarium would be paid. After speaking, Gardner called to find out why he had not been paid. Said he, "I then learned that the inviters did not have, and never had had, the money to cover their commitments" (A 17). He went on to say when confronted with this fraud, the representatives became angry and defensive, going so far as to indicate the he was the problem and that, since their intentions were honorable, Gardner was the villain and they were the victims. (Gardner, 1993, Halting)

Nilsen (1966) tells us, "As a subject of study, ethics deals with questions about the meaning of 'good' and 'bad,' 'right' and 'wrong,' and 'moral obligation'" (p. 1). Curtis and Winsor (1991) note, "Standards of beliefs such as honesty, truthfulness, and fairness, among others, usually form the basis for making ethical judgments regarding the appropriateness of particular human behaviors" (p. 8). Josephson (1989) indicates, "One of the goals of ethical decision-making is to make people aware of the kinds of insider assumptions that they make, the excuses, the rationalizations" (p. 17) DeVito (1988) adds, "To the degree

that communication has an effect, it also has an ethical dimension" (p. 10). DeVito continues, "The major determinant of whether communications are ethical or unethical is to be found in the notion of choice and the assumption that people have a right to make their own choices" (p. 11). He concludes, "Unethical communications would be those that force people (1) to make choices they would not normally make and/or (2) to decline to make choices they would normally make" (p. 12). Providing others with the kind and amount of information that is helpful in making their own free choice is ethical communication.

Purpose

The purpose of this paper is to examine relevant issues of ethical value development in higher education in general and to communication studies in particular. To accomplish this I will discuss: (1) the need for attention to ethics in our culture; (2) selected issues relating to teaching ethical values in university courses; and (3) offer suggestions as to how to move from values-neutral education to proactive values-added education.

Need for Attention To Ethics

Americans, writes Robert Bellah (1989), senior author of Habits of the Heart:

> . . . have come to believe that somehow modern technology will solve all our problems without preventing the individual from doing whatever he or she wants to do. . . . Americans have preferred not to think about the social and political realities that link technology to our individual lives. But

that's what we have to work on. (p. 270-280)

Technology often presents more ethical problems than it resolves. The race to develop PCB's for our electrical/power industry, leaded paint components, toxic pesticides, etc. indicate how often we fail to consider the long-term impact of innovations in our rush to develop and deploy technology.

In this light, a growing number of articles and editorials have urged a central place in the curriculum for the examination of ethical issues. The Hastings Center (1980) noted, "Colleges and professional schools have been urged to worry about the moral and not just the cognitive development of their students" (p. 1). The executive secretary of the Association for Practical & Professional Ethics writes that, "Hundreds of colleges and universities are rethinking their curricula in ethics education to address concerns about educating for civic and professional responsibility (Ethically Speaking, p. 1).

We live in a culture that once appeared to have a moral fiber. We may have become as University of Pennsylvania sociology Professor Digby Baltzell put it, " . . . a society that hasn't any moral center . . . . We tolerate anything" (Carey, 1990, p. 11). The late Pulitzer prize-winning historian Barbara Tuchman echoes,

> It does seem that the knowledge of a difference between right and wrong is absent from our society . . . . So remote is the concept that even to speak of right and wrong marks one to the younger generation as old-fashioned, reactionary and out of touch (p. 11).

This absence of a concept of right and wrong appears to have taken its toll in our society. The international Pinnacle Group, a public relations company, reported the results of a recent survey of American high school seniors:

* 59 percent said they would face six months' probation on an illegal deal to make $10 million.
* 36 percent would plagiarize to pass a test.
* 67 percent would inflate expense accounts.
* 50 percent would pad an insurance claim.
* 66 percent would lie to achieve a business objective.

(School Reform and Ethics, 1989, p. 18.)

It appears that educators are not doing a good job indicating that financial success is pointless unless it is obtained through integrity, honesty, and a deepening sense of qualitative, rather than materialistic, values. Faculty appear unwilling or afraid to draw a line and say that any given thing is wrong. Tatum (1989) suggests, ". . . we don't have the depth of awareness of what ethics is all about. It has to do with everything we do, in every way that we make a decision." He added, "Maybe unconsciously someone doesn't pay attention to these kinds of things, but by default they're making a decision that is an ethical decision." (Administrator: The Management Newsletter for Higher Education)

Gaylin (1989) fears what is happening to our young people. Says he:

> It worries me that we have generations of children being born without the capacity for caring, without figures to identify with. This is a ticking time bomb. And it worries me that

> our culture continues to glorify a guy out on his own, doing his own thing -- and usually it's a very macho thing. (p. 122)

Brazelton (1989) adds, "We don't value children, and we certainly don't value their parents, so we're paying a big price right now (p. 154). Should this not worry us all? We should look at how values are taught in our schools.

According to Christian Science Monitor writers (January 30, 1987), the values that are taught in public schools are filtered through two general modes of contemporary thought: cultural relativity and values neutrality. Not all perceptions of right and wrong, political ideals, forms of behavior, and so forth must be tolerated dispassionately as being equally valid. ("Moral Education" p. B1) (Nor do I want to limit "political correctness" to that position of the teacher or given institution.) The impact of cultural relativity and values neutrality just now is being felt. A freer marketplace of ideas with moral issues receiving center stage for discussion is the call.

There appears to be relatively little sense of a values hierarchy operative in our society. Tuchman (1989) provides an example of this when she indicated that ruling groups don't govern in the interests of the underprivileged classes. Said she:

> We see that now every day, for example, in this question of the homeless, which is not adequately addressed by our government. The problem of the homeless is much more

> important than AIDS, which is an acquired condition, which is self-inflicted through drugs or through behavior. But the condition of the homeless, the necessity of living on an adequate basis is something which government must concern itself with. (p. 5)

While those who acquired AIDS through a transfusion and those who refuse to work when healthy and work was available may mitigate against Tuchman's position, her point is well taken at a macro-level of analysis. A society who, as a whole, is not concerned with solving the problems of the poor as they should be ultimately can be dangerous to everyone's life. Wilson (1989) said it plainly, ". . . no American citizen in this affluent country should be living in poverty. We should commit ourselves to eliminating poverty in American society in the remainder of the twentieth century" (p. 81).

Michael Josephson (1989) of the Institute for the Advancement of Ethics notes:

> Our rights orientation has led to a kind of legal minimalism -- as long as it's legal, it's ethical. We look for the lowest common standard of ethics, and approach life and laws as if everything is the Internal Revenue code. Everyone wants to avoid paying taxes, so finding loopholes and evading those taxes is legitimate. Unfortunately, we find this same attitude in business, politics, and journalism. Look at the libel laws and the way some journalists approach those laws. (p. 17)

Josephson (1989) concluded, "The mandate is that an ethical person ought to do more than he's required to do and less than

he's allowed to do. He must exercise judgment, self-restraint, and conscience" (p. 27). Pushing the world and twisting the rules must cease.

Chomsky (1989) argues that, "We have only one political party -- it's the business party" (p. 42) To the degree that this is true there can be no free market place of ideas, limited justice, and major ethical questions. He argues that corporations have never been listed as a special interest group because they are seen as the national interest itself. The women, labor, youth, ethnic minorities, the poor, elderly, and farmers are viewed as the special interests. According to Chomsky, the public interest is what is good for corporate America. People are the losers in this system. (p. 42)

If we are to dance we must learn to pay the fiddler. The philosophy of letting someone else do it was not the attitude that made this country great. Clayton (1992) notes, "An apolitical curriculum is indeed an attractive notion; hovever, it is also a dangerous mirage" (p. B1). Have we not drifted from the founding ideas with our cultural relativity and values-neutral educational system? There is no such thing as a values-free educational system. To value a value-free curriculum is a value in itself.

Needed Changes

Obviously many changes are needed in our educational system if ethical foundation training is to be successful. Mortimer Adler (1986), as he looked toward the 21st century was quoted as seeing one of the central issues to be " . . . to challenge,

dismantle, and rebuild one of the most solidly entrenched institutions in the nation: the educational establishment" (p. 16). Gregorian (1989) laments:

> Unfortunately, we have entered a phase in our society where education is valued for what it will give you rather than what it will make out of you. The result is that because teachers don't have that which society considers important in terms of wealth and status, the teaching profession is looked down upon in this country. (p. 185)

The seeds of revolt can be the seeds of reform. Higher education has the potential to question public values; it is possible to teach that qualities of life are more important that quantities of things in life.

But is there public support for educational reform in the area of ethics? The Hastings Center (1980) cited a 1978 Gallup Poll that found, "84 percent of public school parents surveyed favored instruction in morality and moral behavior in the schools. Only 12 percent opposed such instruction" (p. 2). While this may not be interpreted by everyone as a mandate for integrating ethics into all levels of education, there is some presumption that such would not meet a stone wall.

In order to study ethics we need to address some obvious questions in each field of study. Nilsen (1966) provide examples for communication study as he asks:

> Is it wrong to tell a lie to avoid hurting someone's feelings? To be honest must we tell the 'whole truth' about what we are describing? If we are trying to sell something, are we

obligated to point out its weaknesses as well as strengths so that the buyer can make a more informed and intelligent choice? Are we being honest if we let someone take our statements to mean one thing when we really intend something else? Do we have any obligation to go out of our way to do good or to say the right thing? More fundamentally, do we really know what is good? Are there any fundamental reasons why we should be good, apart from the practical one that if we treat others ill, we are more likely to receive ill treatment in return (p. 1-2).

Additional questions for study by scholars in and outside of communication are indicated by gender concerns. Bloom (1990) indicates that women communicate their morality and ethics in "a different voice" than men (p. 244) She posits:

> Men develop an ethical system concerned with fairness and based on universal principles, rules, and laws. Moral dilemmas revolve around competing rights. A hierarchical system is created. Relationships are subordinate to rules, and rules are subordinate to universal principles. The overriding concern is 'to do the right thing' and 'stick to one's principles.' Women form an ethical system concerned with responsibility based on caring, empathy, and inclusion. Moral dilemmas are characterized by conflicting responsibilities among a web of enmeshed relationships rather than the competing right of autonomous individuals. The focus for resolving moral dilemmas is not hurting anyone, maintaining harmony, and meeting everyone's needs. Thus the female ethical system is more contextual and situational

because it places a high value on the relationship. (p. 246)

If this analysis is true, is it possible to have an ethical code? If all is situational, then should not teaching revolve around methods for deciding what is more and what is less ethical in a given situation rather than any list of absolutes or specific code of ethics.

Shamir, Reed, & Connell (1990) indicate that ethics should be a salient concern in the recruitment process. They state:

> First and foremost it seems that the selection and recruitment process into the profession are crucial in determining the level of professional ethics among practitioners. Thus, much thought should be given to ways of considering personal ethical values in the recruitment process. (p. 963)

However, if universities give scant attention to the furthering of ethics will there be a pool of ethical applicants from which to hire?

The dearth of ethical concerns in communication texts should be of concern to all of us who teach. Deetz (1990) laments:

> In the 750 page Handbook of Interpersonal Communication (Knapp & Miller, 1985) the word 'ethical' appears twice and 'ethics' does not appear at all. 'Influence,' 'strategy,' and 'compliance' are used throughout. No discussion of ethics appears in the Handbook of Communication Science (Berger & Chaffee, 1987). Both works are filled with value statements and value judgments, but the nature and foundation of such value claims are rarely raised as social ethical

concerns. (p. 226)

It appears that an understanding of what constitutes ethics is requisite as is the need to give attention to ethical issues in textbooks and in the classroom.

Having attempted to establish the need for the study of ethics and having examined some of the issues regarding the teaching of ethics, it time to consider what steps communication professionals should take.

Implementing Ethical Education

The goal of ethical education should be to develop positive and ethical systems of thought that individuals will apply in their professional lives. Hasting Center (1980) writers provide us with further ideas as they write:

> We believe that the primary purpose of courses in ethics ought to be to provide students with those concepts and analytical skills that will enable them to grapple with broad ethical and professional dilemmas, as well as to reflect on the moral issues facing the larger society. (p. 48)

Courses offered in philosophy and religious studies may be helpful in providing some of the concepts and analytical skills. However, I believe that each discipline, especially communication, should have ethical education extended throughout the curriculum and have at least one capstone course in applied ethics specifically for professional development in the field.

Robert Barker (1987) said it well when he indicated, "Just as we now teach student to write 'across the curriculum,' we must encourage students to consider the ethical and social

implications of all that they know and are able to do" (Christian Science Monitor, January 30).

Johannesen (1983) recommends that ethical issues be examined in a three-step process:

> (1) specifying exactly what ethical criteria, standards or perspectives we are applying, (2) justifying the reasonableness and relevancy of these standards, and (3) idicating in what respects the communication evaluated succeeds or fails in measuring up to the standards. (p. 9).

Johannesen provides us with a paradigm to apply ethics to communication studies.

Further, as Curtis and Winsor (1991) indicate:

> Ethical values should be taught to encourage cultural diversity and pluralism. We do not hold to the notion of one official morality for everyone; rather, we recommend that educators present multiple considerations of what is just and right through analyses of case studies. We believe, ultimately, that all moral decisions should remain with the students. . . . We do not favor either religious or political indoctrination. . . . Teaching students to seek the good should be the [ultimate] goal of education. (p. 11)

Teaching ethical values should accomplish something useful for society. Courses should be designed to clarify: (1) that ethical problems are endemic to all spheres of life; (2) that how they are understood and responded to can make a difference to each person and situation; and, (3) that there are good ways and poor ways of dealing with them. (Callahan & Bok, 1980, p. 62)

Development of a code of an interpersonal communication ethics would be step toward a basis of teaching ethics and understanding interpersonal justice. Johannesen (1983) summarizes several attempts to provide such codes. Reviewing his chapter "Interpersonal Communication and Small Group Discussion" can provide a working basis of such code development. Some ideas follow:

> 1. Work for dialogue in all relational communication. This would include being candid and frank in sharing (owning) personal beliefs and feelings. Concepts such as being authentic (no means no) and open with agreement and disagreement (forsaking hidden agendas) would be included.
>
> 2. Encouraging harmonious relationships. This would include refusal to use others (like things) or manipulate others in order for our will to prevail. Further, racism, sexism, and age discrimination would receive affirmative, constructive attention in an effort to restructure unjust and ethically repugnant stereotypes.
>
> 3. Information should be disclosed accurately, fully, and any losses or distortions of intended meanings would be minimized.
>
> 4. Verbal and nonverbal cues, words as well as actions, should be consistent in conveying the meanings intended.
>
> 5. While flexible in considering the contextual demands of a given situation, intentional deception generally would be considered unethical. (see Johannesen, 1983, pp. 91-98)

This synthesis and adaption is meant to be suggestive rather than prescriptive.

I recommend that basic ethical values be stated in each course syllabus throughout the curriculum. The values should be explained carefully early in each course. Readings should be recommended that reflect a variety of ethical points of view.

Perhaps certain courses should be marked for ethical value emphasis. (This would be similar to what is done at some

universities regarding writing intense courses for writing across the curriculum.) Again, each discipline should have a course required to focus upon ethics.

Moral/ethical dilemmas (case studies) are good methods for developing the discussion of ethical issues. Papers should be assigned that call for integration of course content and value decisions. Portions of student papers can be used for lively discussion of value-related issues.

Donaldson (1992) indicates that multinational corporations need to have employees who understand basic ethics. Donaldson identifies ten rights that both multinational and domestic corporations are bound to respect:

* the right to freedom of physical movement* the right to ownership of property
* the right to freedom from torture
* the right to a fair trial
* the right to nondiscriminatory treatment (i.e., freedom from discrimination on the basis of such characteristics as race or sex)
* the right to physical security
* the right to freedom of speech and association
* the right to minimal education
* the right to political participation
* the right to subsistence (p. 8)

If our graduates sought employment from corporations that would at least adhere to these ethical guidelines progress would be made. While host-country law may be almost a joke, employee standards can change the policies of multinational corporations. Hoffman and Petry (1992) comment:

> We believe most employers would acknowledge that, as a general principle, it is more ethical to respect individual rights and due process than not, but they resist implementing rights and due-process protection in the workplace because

they think it would jeopardize profits. This is where they draw the line on business ethics. (p. 13)

If employment was considered a right (as it is in the Netherlands and elsewhere) rather than employment-at-will as it is in America, employees would be empowered to a greater level to advance ethical considerations including whistleblowing when needed. Hoffman and Petry (1992) conclude:

> Significantly, the absence of an employment-at-will doctrine does not seem to have affected productivity and efficiency. On the contrary, by many standard measures, productivity and efficiency are greater in countries that operate without the employment-at-will doctirne. (p. 13).

Further Plonski (1990) links academia and government in values training by noting:

> As government grows larger, the problem of unethical behavior increases because more and more activities and sums of money are involved. In addition, the move toward deregulation and contracting out of governmental services has opened up whole new arenas of interest to the business community who can benefit greatly by governmental inattentiveness. (p. 185)

It is time that our curriculum reflected preparation for employment ethics for multinational corporations and govenmental ethics.

Green (1985) provides some indications of how to construct a "curriculum of moral skill:"

CURRICULUM OF MORAL SKILL

I. Attain competence with the following series of questions

of decision and choice having to do with some collective -- the school, the neighborhood, the town or whatever.

A. Is X a good thing for us to do, or is X a good way for us to do Y?

1. A "no" answer is never sufficient
2. It is necessary to add a proposal for improvement

B. A "yes" answer obligates us to confront three more questions

1. Whose interests are you expressing?
2. Whose interests are you not expressing?
3. How does your proposal balance the goods being sought?

C. More about the interests being considered

1. Are they good?
2. Are they long-run or only short-run interests?
3. How extensive are they?
4. Are they limited to a small group, or do they have elements that are strong and common to all members?

II. Cultivate rootedness through the teaching of history as remembered

A. It is insufficient to find roots in some space, or in some profession, or in relation to our contemporaries

B. Roots must be found in membership that extends through time

C. Since our memories are only as long as our lives, we must acquire a social memory whose reach is more remote by means of an education (pp. 12-15, 22)

This paradigm offers a place to begin in guiding discussion of ethical issues.

It is obvious that higher education can not do it all in ending racism, poverty, social privilege, etc. A realistic view of what schools can do is important. Clalyton (1992) notes:

> The university is perhaps the single most potent institution shaping long-term views of politics. Universities produce the ideas around which political alignments and cleavages materialize; college students, once exposed to such ideas

become the vanguard for political change or maintenance of the status quo. . . . . However, curricula by their very nature are political. They must include some ideas and exclede others. We cannot escape making decisions about what knowledge or skills are relevant to society as it exists and as we want it to exist. Even the decision to teach critical thinking or intellectual independence assumes a substantive political choice -- that we want society filled with individuals capable of exercising such skills. (p. B2)

University faculty should design programs that produce, among others, civilized and literate persons while encouraging creativity and problem-solving skills. Clayton (1992) supports this as he writes:

> One value that clearly must be taught is that one's moral worth, like the value of one's ideas, is not related to the arbitrary, immutable characteristics of the individual, such as race, gender, or station at birth. Another is that individual rights and liberties should take precedence over what various groups or communities defie as good or virtuous. These are substantive ideas that have long intellectual histories, and students should be exposed to them by reading authors who have contributed to their evolution and contemporary understanding. (p. B2)

Brock (1990) reported the efforts of a New Jersey Commissioner of Education advisory council to recommend a common core of values that would be integrated into the K-12 curriculum. She summarized as follows:

1. CIVIC RESPONSIBILITY is based upon Acknowledgement of Authority, Global Awareness, Justice, Fairness, Patriotism, and Property Rights.

2. RESPECT FOR NATURAL ENVIRONMENT is based upon Care for conservation of all living things as well as land, air and water plus Conduct recognizing environmental interdependence.

3. RESPECT FOR OTHERS is based upon Compassion, Service to Others, Courtesy, Cooperativeness, Honesty, Loyalty, Moderation, Understanding of various religious traditions, Regard for human life, and Tolerance.

4. RESPECT FOR OTHERS is based upon Accountability, Courage, Diligence, Commitment, Reliability, Frugality, Thrift, Knowledge and Learning, Moral Courage, Self-Esteem, and Pride (New Jersey Dept. of Education, April 1989) (p. 230)

This effort is worthwhile for all state departments of education. Further, the issues of secrecy, violence, fraud, etc. are at the essence of democracy. It may be too much to expect universities to produce students who seek good in everything. However, it is realistic to provide a grounding that would minimize doing evil.

Teaching the humanities in general and communication in particular means teaching about values. The real obstacle of teaching about values is cultural; it is not an intellectual issue. Teaching values means knowing how to construct the right questions and how to avoid simplistic answers. Students need help in learning how to frame appropriate ethical questions.

Summary

In this paper I have indicated that there are reasons why educators should be concerned about ethical standards and behaviors of our graduates. I have discussed some of the important issues regarding teaching ethical issues. Further, I have called for implementation of basic ethical education in the form of a capstone course in each major and form of "ethics

across the curriculum." Finally, I have sketched a few ideas that might form a beginning of more productive ethical education for communication classes and for other disciplines.

Let us renew our efforts!

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Center For The Teaching And Study Of Applied Ethics
University of Nebraska-Lincoln
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